The Chronicles of Narnia and *Paradise Lost*:

"That by knowing me here for a little, you may know me better there"

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Introduction

In November 2017 it became known that the filming of the fourth movie in the *The Chronicles of Narnia*-series would commence this year, 2018 (Anderton). The first film of the franchise, *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, was released in 2005 to generally high acclaim, even winning an Oscar ("The Chronicles"). Since the next two installments were not as well received, hopes are up that this fourth movie, *The Silver Chair*, will "reboot the franchise entirely" (Gallagher). It is striking that there is still an interest in adapting for the screen a series of children's books written by an avowedly Christian bachelor shortly after the Second World War; a series, moreover, that has quite recently suffered strong criticism, which, for instance, has called its Christian elements "repugnant" (Toynbee). Renowned author Philip Pullman especially abhors C.S. Lewis's books, deeming them "blatant religious propaganda," "racist," and "sexist" (Ezard). Remarkably, though, one of the main sources for his own fantasy trilogy was John Milton's Christian epic *Paradise Lost*, published in 1667 (O'Brien), a source that was also hugely important for C.S. Lewis (Baird Hardy 8). However, while Pullman inverts Milton's message that the Fall was a "moral tragedy," instead interpreting it as "human emancipation," Lewis follows Milton more closely (O'Brien).

Although the similarities between *Paradise Lost* and *The Chronicles of Narnia* had been noticed and researched before, the first, and thus far last, extensive survey of the subject was carried out by Elizabeth Baird Hardy in her book *Milton, Spenser and The Chronicles of Narnia: Literary Sources for the C.S. Lewis novels*, which was published in 2007. Her focus is on Lewis's "depiction of evil," his "depiction of women," "landscape and setting," and "the depiction of spiritual issues" (Baird Hardy 15-6). These are of course some of the most likely areas for finding similarities. Therefore there will obviously be some overlap, but this thesis

will be on the one hand broader in focus, and on the other hand more specific, as will be explained below. The aim is to deepen scholarly understanding of Milton's influence on Lewis precisely by combining a sweeping with a more detailed approach.

The first chapter will explore where and in what way Milton's *Paradise Lost* is echoed in Lewis' *Chronicles*, and thus have a broad focus. It will concentrate on several passages which are very nearly quotations of Milton's epic, followed by an investigation of the similarities in the description of creation and fall in *The Magician's Nephew* (the first book of the *Narnia*-series) and *Paradise Lost*. The chapter will close with a survey of the ways in which characters in Narnia resemble characters in Milton's work.

The second chapter will be much more specific in focus, zooming in on the theme of gender hierarchy. This is a theme that is impossible to miss for anyone reading *Paradise Lost*, or many others of Milton's works for that matter. C.S. Lewis also regarded hierarchy as a central issue in Milton's poem, since he treats it two chapters before his hobbyhorse, Satan as anything but the hero of *Paradise Lost* (*Preface*). Gender hierarchy is the type of hierarchy that has primarily been studied (and criticised) in *Paradise Lost* as well as *The Chronicles*. My research will demonstrate that Milton's complex ideas about this have occasionally found their way into Narnian hierarchical structures. Nevertheless, C.S. Lewis sometimes twisted *Paradise Lost*'s depiction of hierarchy too, as will be revealed after close-reading certain passages from both works.

The subject of my thesis is thus an intertextual one. Intertextuality can very broadly be explained as the notion that "meaning [is] the result of the interplay of signs in a semiotic process" ("Intertextuality," *Encyclopedia)*. This thesis will employ "the more limited or restricted sense" of this notion ("Intertextuality," *Encyclopedia*). Intertextuality, in the limited sense of the notion defined as "the dialogic relations among texts," posits that a text is "always in conversation with other texts" (Hutcheon XII; "Intertextuality," *Key Terms*). C.S.

Lewis's *Chronicles* are in some way related to many different preceding texts, but *Paradise Lost* is surely one of its "most influential sources" (Baird Hardy 8). *The Chronicles* contain "many references to [and also some] quotations of" Milton's poem ("Intertextuality," *Key Terms*). Allusions as well as passages that are almost quotations will both be discussed in the first chapter. In the second chapter, I will show that that these allusions and echoes also serve to illumine how Lewis positions his work regarding the theme of gender hierarchy when compared to *Paradise Lost*'s position on this theme.

The intertextual relationship between the two texts only becomes "an ongoing dialogical process" "if the receiver is acquainted with the adapted text" (Hutcheon 21). Michael Riffaterre claims that "intertextuality is the perception of the reader of the sense of the connections" ("Intertextuality," *Encyclopedia*). My thesis attempts to examine precisely this: the sense, the meaning of the connections between Narnia and Eden. It will try to find out not only which connections there are, but also what those connections do, what message they help send. The aim is to demonstrate that reading *The Chronicles of Narnia* with *Paradise Lost* in mind will "add to [the reader's appreciation of] the beauty and depth of the *Chronicles* (Baird Hardy 162).

However, before it is possible to say anything about Lewis's reworking of elements of *Paradise Lost* in his own books, the theory of source criticism demands that the possibility for such a "causal relationship" is established (Fisher 37). Accordingly it has to be demonstrated that Lewis did indeed know Milton, so that it is reasonable to list him as a source. This proves to be very easy for in 1908 Lewis recorded in his diary that he had read Milton's poem: he was aged nine at the time (Baird Hardy 12). His familiarity with the poem is furthermore attested in the published version of the Ballard Matthews Lectures he gave on it, entitled *A Preface to Paradise Lost*. This book was an important source for my thesis.

John Milton and C.S. Lewis were both Protestants. The works of both clearly display their beliefs, as well as drawing heavily on the biblical narrative. This biblical "third party" explains some of the similarities between *Paradise Lost* and *The Chronicles of Narnia*, but it will become evident that in fact many other similarities can be traced back to Lewis's admiration for and use of Milton's poetry (Fisher 38).

Chapter one will discuss the explicit correspondences and intertextual links between *The Chronicles* and *Paradise Lost*. It will provide an overview of such correspondences, mainly with regard to near-quotations, the creation and fall narratives, and characterization, and it will also attempt to find an answer to the question of why Lewis consciously alludes to Milton's work. Chapter two will discuss the theme of gender hierarchy, first in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and then in Lewis's *The Chronicles of Narnia*.

Chapter 1

The Intertextual Relationship between *Paradise Lost* and *The Chronicles of Narnia*

In the introduction I have posited the claim that there is an intertextual relationship between John Milton's epic poem *Paradise Lost* and C.S. Lewis's seven-book children's series *The Chronicles of Narnia*. This chapter will provide evidence for that claim. It will start with a discussion of three passages in *The Chronicles* which come quite close to being actual quotations of lines of *Paradise Lost*. I will then examine the Creation and Fall stories in both works, because many textual echoes from Milton's epic can specifically be found in the sixth (or chronologically first) book of the *Narnia*-series, *The Magician's Nephew*. Finally, I will show how many of the characters in Lewis's books are in some way or other an echo of characters in Milton's poem.

1.1 Quotations

The three passages in both works which bear such a great resemblance to *Paradise Lost* that they are almost quotations remarkably are all related to Satan and the Fall. The first passage comes from *The Silver Chair*, and describes the transformation of the evil Green Witch (who also goes by the more graceful name of "The Lady of the Green Kirtle") into her other self, a serpent (Lewis 597). The metamorphosis takes up a quarter of a page but the relevant part is this: "Her instrument dropped from her hands. Her arms appeared to be fastened to her sides. Her legs intertwined with each other, and her feet had disappeared" (633). Milton in a similar manner describes the way Satan transforms into a snake as a punishment for his abuse of the snake's appearance to tempt Eve: "His Armes clung to his Ribs, his Leggs entwining / Each other, till supplanted down he fell / A monstrous Serpent" (X.512-4). Besides strongly

suggesting a link between Milton and Lewis, this allusion also connects Satan and the Green Witch. Not only is their appearance the same, but their appearance further serves both as a punishment. Satan loses his ability to speak when he is in the guise of the snake: "he would have spoke / But hiss for hiss returnd with forked tongue" (X.517-8). Her change into a serpent loses the Witch her head, as Rilian says: "Yet I am glad, gentlemen, that the foul Witch took to her serpent form at the last. It would not have suited well either with my heart or with my honour to have slain a woman" (Lewis, *The Silver Chair* 634).

The second passage comes from *The Magician's Nephew*. Polly and Digory are discussing the events at the Tree with Aslan, telling him that the Witch ate from its apples. Polly asks Aslan whether the fruit will allow her to live forever, and he replies: "She [Jadis] has won her heart's desire; she has unwearying strength and endless days like a goddess. But length of days with an evil heart is only length of misery and already she begins to know it" (Lewis 100). The first part of this quotation links Jadis to Eve. Eve too wishes to become divine through her consumption of the fruit. She is even deluded into thinking it has really worked: "I / Have also tasted, and have also found / Th'effects to correspond, opener mine eyes / Dimm erst, dilated Spirits, ampler Heart, And growing up to Godhead" (Milton, *Paradise Lost* IX.873-7). She misguides herself though, and God intercedes. He explains more about the second special Tree in Paradise, one that gives eternal life to the one eating its fruits, and which grows "fast by" the Tree of Knowledge (IV.221). God knows that if she eats from this tree, she will become immortal, but he also knows that immortality would mean "only length of misery" (Lewis 100). The Tree of Life therefore becomes one of the reasons Adam and Eve are banished from Eden. God's precise explanation goes as follows: "I at first with two fair gifts / Created him endowed, with Happiness / And Immortalitie: that fondly lost, / This other serv'd but to eternize woe" (XI.57-60). Through compassionate divine intervention, Eve is thus saved from worsening her predicament by lengthening her sinful

misery to eternity. This passage from God's speech to Messiah very closely resembles Aslan's words to Polly.

There is a crucial difference, though, between Jadis and Eve. Eve is only partially held responsible for her fall, because Satan cleverly enticed her and therefore bears part of the blame. Moreover, Adam also is responsible for Eve's as well as his own fall, because, as God tells him, he wrongly resigned the task "to beare rule, which was thy part / And person, hadst thou known thyself aright" (X.155-6). Had he shouldered his male burden of responsibility, he could have prevented the loss of Paradise, because Adam had "better knowledge" and was "not deceav'd" (IX.998). Jadis, by contrast, is fully responsible for her own action so there is no divine intervention for her; her immortality will "serv[e] but to eternize woe" (XI.60). Through this allusion Jadis is thus aptly associated with both Satan and Eve. Like Eve, she wants to be a goddess, and eats an apple to achieve this goal. As with Satan, there are no extenuating circumstances for her fall. Hence she will be eternally miserable, and she knows it.

In another similarity to both Satan and Eve, she tries to take others with her. Although the Witch already realizes that she has made a mistake, she still runs after Digory, who has only gathered an apple at Aslan's command and not to eat it himself, and tells him that he "will miss some knowledge that would have made you happy all your life" if he leaves (Lewis, *The Magician's Nephew* 93). If he does eat the apple, Jadis promises, "you and I will both live forever and be king and queen of this whole world" (93). This sounds much like Satan, who assures Eve that eating from the fruit will bring her a "happier life" (IX.697). The irony is, of course, that he full well knows that disobeying God leads to the opposite of happiness, as he openly admits as he lands upon earth: "Me miserable!" (IV.73). Jadis, likewise, is aware of what she has brought on herself by eating herself immortal: "there might be some sense in that last line about getting your heart's desire and getting despair along with it. For the Witch

looked stronger and prouder than ever, and even, in a way, triumphant; but her face was deadly white, white as salt" (Lewis 93). Yet she too attempts to persuade Digory to make the same mistake.

Eve, in a similar gesture to Satan and Jadis, tempts Adam to join her in her sin, but like Satan and unlike the Witch, she succeeds. It is important to remember, however, that Eve is still under the self-delusional impression that eating the fruit is a good thing when she tempts Adam. The Witch more closely resembles Satan, whose principal reason for taking mankind with him is "to spite / The great Creatour" by seeking "mutual amitie so streight, so close, / That I with you [man] must dwell, or you with me" (II.384-5; IV.376-7). He wants to rule over mankind, lure them away from God, just as Lewis describes Jadis's desire to rule over Narnia, ostensibly with Digory (or in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* with Edmund) but really on her own. Eve, on the other hand, truthfully wishes for Adam "that equal Lot / May joyne us, equal Joy, as equal Love; / Least thou not tasting, different degree / Disjoyne us" (IX.881-4).

The effect of this second allusion is thus to relate Jadis to Eve, who brings evil into the world, in this way foreshadowing the evil Jadis will bring to Narnia. Furthermore, it connects Jadis with Satan, in this way emphasizing her evil nature. Lastly, by evoking the effects of falling Milton describes in *Paradise Lost,* Lewis provides a contrast with his own creation. There mankind, in the form of Digory, ultimately does not fall, so that Narnia is a version of Earth untainted by sin.

Incidentally, it is significant that the tree in Lewis's garden bears apples. The Bible never specifies which kind of fruit Adam and Eve ate so that could not have been Lewis's source. Milton, however, does stipulate that "Him [man] by fraud I [Satan] have seduc'd / From his Creator; and the more to increase / Your wonder, with an Apple" (X.485-7). Although the identification of the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge with an apple has been quite common

in Western literature since the Renaissance, given the many similarities between Milton's garden of Eden and Lewis's garden, it seems likely Lewis followed Milton's example (Martyris).

One of the most famous quotes from *Paradise Lost* is Satan's boast that "The mind is its own place, and in it self / Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heav'n" (Milton I.254-5). Later he returns to this notion, admitting that it is no longer true because of his own wrong choices: "which way shall I flie / Infinite wrauth, and infinite despaire? / Which way I flie is Hell; my self am Hell" (IV.73-5). Lewis refers to these moments in the final book of the *Narnia*-series. *The Last Battle* describes the end of Narnia and the lands surrounding it, and it also features a kind of Last Judgement. Every reasonable being is ushered through the doorway of a Stable, where it meets Aslan and "one or other of two things happen[s]": those who love Aslan are welcomed into an infinitely better version of Narnia, those who fear and hate him pass him by on the left hand and "disappear into his huge black shadow" (Lewis 751). Compassionate Lucy wants to help the Dwarfs, who are blinded in their conviction that there is no Aslan and that "the Dwarfs are for the Dwarfs" (748). Aslan cannot persuade them otherwise, however, since "[t]hey will not let us help them . . . Their prison is only in their own minds, yet they are in that prison; and so afraid of being taken in that they cannot be taken out" (748). The echo of Satan's words resounds ringingly. The Dwarfs, like Satan, have made their choice and are unable to renege. They have made their own minds into a prison, a Hell.

It is significant that Aslan does not force the Dwarfs in any manner: they must come to believe in him of their own volition, or not. This links Aslan once more to Milton's God, to whom it is highly important that he created Adam and Eve "Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall" because "Not free, what proof could they have givn sincere / Of true allegiance,

constant Faith or Love, / Where onely what they needs must do appeard, / Not what they would" (III.99; 103-6).

1.2 Creation and The Garden of Eden

The Magician's Nephew, published as the sixth book in the series but chronologically the first, primarily details the creation of Narnia and the entrance of evil into this world before it was even created. Therefore it seems logical that most of the intertextual links between Lewis's children's books and *Paradise Lost*, apart from parallels in the portrayal of characters, can be found here. This section concentrates on those intertextual elements that do not relate to similarities in characterization, because that will be the focus of the next section.

One of the most noticeable correspondences is the likeness of the garden in Narnia where Digory is sent to obtain an apple to the Garden of Eden. Milton's Paradise is described as "crown[ing] with her enclosure green / As with a rural mound the champain head / Of a steep wilderness" allowing "our general Sire" a beautiful view of his "neather Empire" (Milton, *Paradise Lost* IV.133-5; 144; 145). Paradise is surrounded by a "verdurous wall" through which "One gate there only was, and that look'd East" (143; 178). The garden is full of fruit trees, but "The middle tree" is the Tree of Life (195). There is also a "fresh Fountain" in the middle of the garden, of which the water streams downhill joining in "the neather Flood" (229; 231). Every single item of this description would also fit for the garden in Narnia. It too is at the top of a "green steep hill," enclosed by a "high wall of green turf" with the only gates "facing due east" (Lewis, *The Magician's Nephew* 91). A fountain rises "near the middle of the garden," and the Tree is instantly recognizable because "it stood in the very centre" (92).

The fate of the Garden of Eden in *Paradise Lost* is rather dire. During the Flood, "this Mount / Of Paradise [shall] by might of Waves be moovd / Out of his place . . . And there [at sea] take root an Iland salt and bare" (XI.829-34). Milton thus destroys Eden for good. Even

after the Last Judgment, Eden will not return to its former glory. Instead, Michael informs Adam, "the Earth / Shall all be Paradise, far happier place / Then this of Eden" (XII.463-5). In Narnia, on the other hand, every creature that has been welcomed into the Stable in the final events of *The Last Battle* is led to a bigger version of the garden where Digory plucked his apple. The terms used to describe the garden in *The Last Battle* are the same as those used to describe the garden in *The Magician's Nephew*. The walls and golden gates are there, as are the Tree in the middle and all the fruit trees surrounding it, and Lewis even puts Adam and Eve in it:

> at the foot of that tree were two thrones, and in those two thrones a King and Queen so great and beautiful that everyone bowed down before them. And well they might, for these two were King Frank and Queen Helen from whom all the most ancient Kings of Narnia and Archenland are descended. And Tirian felt as you would feel if you were brought before Adam and Eve in all their glory. (764-5)

In this passage, Lewis creates a clear reverse situation from that presented in *Paradise Lost*. In *The Chronicles*, there is no reason for the garden to be destroyed, because Digory heeds the notice on the gates to stay away from the fruit unless you take it for others: "those who steal or those who climb my wall, / Shall find their heart's desire and find despair;" it is only the Witch who disobeys this command (92). Unlike the Garden of Eden, which is forever lost because of Adam and Eve's transgression, the garden in Narnia can keep its "close link with heaven, or in Narnian terms, Aslan's Country" (Baird Hardy 118). Therefore, his first humans here can be given what Michael tells Adam he has lost as a result of sin: "this [that is, Eden] had been / Perhaps thy Capital Seate, from whence had spred / All generations, and had hither come / From all ends of th'Earth, to celebrate thee thir great Progenitor" (XI.342-5). Frank and Helen, the Narnian Adam and Eve, are not present at the Last Judgment. They reside in Eden, where all of their descendants go to honour them. By providing this opposite

mirror image, Lewis again shows that his Narnia is not tainted by sin in the same way as Earth is. Frank and Helen are excellent rulers, who were not responsible for bringing evil into Narnia. Rather than evil dwelling in everyone through original sin, as it does in Adam and Eve's descendants, people in Narnia are still generally good, though free to choose evil.

Apart from a very similar setting, there are also resemblances in plot details. When Digory plucks the apple, he is not yet in the wrong for he does not intend to eat it but bring it back to Aslan at whose behest he went to the garden. However, he has trouble following up his order and original plan for two reasons, one of which will be discussed below. The other reason is described as follows: "he couldn't help looking at it and smelling it before he put it away. It would have been better if he had not. A terrible thirst and hunger came over him and a longing to taste that fruit" (Lewis, *The Magician's Nephew* 92). This is reminiscent of the description of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge in *Paradise Lost*. The narrator, Satan and Eve all concur that the apple "to behold / Might tempt alone," because its "savorie odour" and "fairest colours" cause an "eager appetite" and "sharp desire" to eat it (IX.735-6; 579; 577; 740; 584).

The sequence of Creation in Narnia is roughly the same as the order of Creation in the Bible: first there is light, including the sun and stars (this is where Lewis diverges from the biblical creation story, where the sun and moon are only created on the fourth day), then vegetation, followed by animals, and by those creatures that closest resemble humans, Talking Beasts, dryads, "gods Fauns and Satyrs and Dwarfs," and it all finishes with a man and a woman being crowned as king and queen (*The Magician's Nephew* 71). Milton of course also follows this sequence of events. The Book of Genesis is not very specific, though, about how all of this comes into being. Milton therefore used his creative license in order to be able to recount the Creation in more detail. The King James Bible, for instance, reads the following concerning the creation of the animals: "And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living

creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind" (Genesis 1.25). Milton has taken this very literally so that the earth

> strait
>
> Op'ning her fertile Woomb teem'd at a Birth
>
> Innumerous living Creatures . . .
>
> The grassie Clods now Calv'd, now half appeer'd /
>
> The Tawnie Lion, pawing to get free. (VII.453-64)

Lewis follows suit; his animals too are born from the earth:

> Can you imagine a stretch of grassy land bubbling like water in a pot? For that is really the best description of what is happening. In all directions it was swelling into humps. . . . And the humps moved and swelled until they burst, and the crumbled earth poured out of them, and from each hump there came out an animal. (Lewis, *The Magician's Nephew* 68-9)

In addition to the fact that both authors depict the animals as emerging fully formed from the earth, there are other similarities in their extended description of the animals' creation. Elizabeth Baird Hardy even describes these correspondences as "[t]he most remarkable demonstration of Milton's influence on Narnian creation" (114). She calls to attention that Lewis as well as Milton "focus on a number of specific creatures" (115). Felines and elephants (called "Behemoth" in *Paradise Lost*) are mentioned in both, but two animals in particular are described in very similar terms. Milton records how "the swift Stag from under ground / Bore up his branching head," thus likening the stag's antlers to the branches of a tree (VII.469-70). Lewis makes this comparison more explicit, claiming that "[t]he stags were the queerest to watch, for of course the antlers came up a long time before the rest of them, so at first Digory thought they were trees" (*The Magician's Nephew* 69). Milton, furthermore, explains that the mole "the crumbl'd Earth above them threw / In Hillocks" (VII.468-9).

Lewis's moles "came out just as a mole might come out in England," which is similar to how they come out in Milton. More significant, though, is the direct citation "crumbled earth" (see above) in the general description of the animals' creation. All in all, it seems highly likely that Lewis modelled his creation of the Narnian beasts after Milton.

1.3 Characters

Compared to *Paradise Lost*, Lewis's *Chronicles* contain many more characters. It is therefore remarkable that so many of those characters echo characters of Milton's poem. A case could be made that every single evil person in Narnia echoes particular elements of *Paradise Lost*'s Satan. Several characters also have clear intertextual links with Eve, Abdiel, God and Adam. In this section, I will discuss these intertextual links, following the order above: Satan, then Eve, Abdiel, and God, and lastly Adam.

C.S. Lewis is a well-known "anti-Satanist," having devoted an entire chapter in his *Preface to Paradise Lost* to his conviction that Milton intended to showcase the "absurdity of Satan" as well as "the misery which he suffers and inflicts" (Carey 161; Lewis 93). His belief that Satan is ultimately "ridiculous" is demonstrated through the evil characters in his *Narnia*-series.

The first villain we meet in *The Chronicles*, whether read chronologically or in the order in which they were published, is Jadis, the White Witch. She is the evil character with the most presence, both literally and figuratively, and she is also the one who most resembles Satan. Milton stresses that although Satan has lost some of his lustre, he is still "In shape and gesture proudly eminent / Stood like a Towr," for just "th'excess / Of glory" has been "obscur'd" (I.590-1; 593-4; 594). His fallen state is visible only in the "considerate Pride / Waiting Revenge" in his "cruel" eyes (I.603-4; 604). Similarly, Lewis repeatedly points out

that Jadis is "a great lady," with a "beautiful face in other respects, but proud and cold and stern" (*The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* 123).

There are many parallels in plot details too, some of which I will discuss in this section, others in the next chapter. Satan's main claim to fame is his role as the seducer of mankind. The Bible, the most reliable source for information on this subject, provides hardly any material regarding Satan except for the disastrous part he plays in Genesis 3. The rebellion in heaven that takes up most of book VI of *Paradise Lost* is based upon a few short verses in Revelation 12, and almost all of what Milton describes of the events in hell in books I and II stems from his own imagination rather than any biblical source. Jadis, like Satan, often plays the role of temptress. Her cleverly worded note tempts Digory to strike the bell which brings her back to life: "Make your choice, adventurous Stranger, / Strike the bell and bide the danger, / Or wonder, till it drives you mad, / What would have followed if you had" (*The Magician's Nephew* 35). Later on, she tries to persuade him to eat an apple himself, or at least bring one back for his dying mother. She also seduces Edmund with enchanted Turkish delight, prompting him to bring his brother and sisters to her so that she can prevent their delivery of Narnia. A surprising detail in *Paradise Lost* is the ease with which Satan can enter Paradise: "At one slight bound high over leap'd all bound / Of Hill or highest Wall, and sheer within / Lights on his feet" (IV.181-3). Jadis enters the Narnian garden in the same way: "the Witch had climbed the wall, or vaulted over it" (Lewis, *The Magician's Nephew* 93). It is also striking that neither Satan nor Jadis use force to get their point across; instead they rely on their wily logic. Satan manages to convince Eve to ignore God's plain command, arguing that God should be glad of her enterprise, and that if he is not and punishes her, he is "Not just" and therefore "not God" (IX.701; 701). Jadis, correspondingly, tries (but fails) to tempt Digory by pointing out that nobody would know, that he is crazy to run errands for "a wild beast in a strange world that is no business of yours" (*The Magician's Nephew* 94). She even

resorts to blackmailing him by asking what his mother would think "if she knew that you could have taken her pain away and given her back her life" (94). Her claim that the apple can make your life infinitely better is quite similar to Satan's claim that he has attained "life more perfect" by his consumption of the fruit. The facts that the Witch glosses over the warning on the gate, and that she attempts to discredit Aslan — "look how heartless he has made you" — also directly echo Satan's seduction manoeuvres (94).

So far it has become clear that Jadis serves as a version of Satan in Narnia. She is less successful, however, because her temptation tactics in the end fail: Digory does not fall into her trap a second time, and Edmund is fortunately unable to fulfil his promise to her. Narnia is protected for a thousand years from the Witch by the tree that grows from the apple which Digory obediently brings back to Aslan. Through Digory's ultimate obedience, Narnia avoids earth's destiny as a fallen world. Narnia achieves what God had promised Adam and Eve in P*aradise Lost*: "Your bodies may at last turn all to Spirit, . . . [you] may at choice / Here or in Heav'nly Paradises dwell, / If ye be found obedient" (V.497-501).

As previously mentioned, C.S. Lewis believes that Satan, and really all evil, is "ridiculous" (*Preface* 93). He is also certain that Milton agrees with him, declaring that Milton's prose works show "that he believed everything detestable to be, in the long run, also ridiculous" (93). John Carey explains that anti-Satanists like Lewis "take Satan's hostility to Almighty power as a sign of folly" (164). So the ridiculous nature of evil lies in evil's denial of its rightful place, its origin, even its very existence. Lewis compares Satan to someone "sawing off the branch he is sitting on" (*Preface* 94). Ultimately, evil, and thus Satan but also the antagonists of *The Chronicles*, refuses to acknowledge that it only exists by the grace of a higher power, which means that the vice of pride plays a vastly important role in being evil, and therefore being ridiculous. It will be demonstrated that much of the ridiculousness from the evil characters in the *Narnia*-series comes from excess pride.

The ridiculousness of Satan is very clearly mirrored in Jadis on various occasions. Despite her imposing stature, aunt Letty is not impressed, and disdainfully calls her a "shameless hussy" (*The Magician's Nephew* 51). The Londoners she informs of her royalty are similarly unimpressed, even "making fun of her" (58). And when she hurls a lamp post at Aslan without doing him any harm, "she shrieked and ran," an image hardly very dignified (66). Moreover, this is an image that clearly echoes the moment in the battle in heaven in book VI of *Paradise Lost* where one of Satan's chief co-conspirators, Moloch, is hurt, and this unfamiliar sensation scares him so much that he "fled bellowing" (362).

The Green Witch of *The Silver Chair*, like Jadis and Satan, is dazzlingly beautiful: during her first appearance, she rides a "horse so lovely that you wanted to kiss its nose and give it a lump of sugar at once. But the lady, who rode side-saddle and wore a long, fluttering dress of dazzling green, was lovelier still" (589). Her other appearance, however, is that of a green serpent, a clear echo of Satan's disguise and later punishment. Also like Jadis and Satan, she at first tries to save herself and her plan by using twisted logic alongside "a handful of green powder" spreading a "very sweet and drowsy smell" and "a steady, monotonous thrumming" on a "musical instrument rather like a mandolin" (629). Where Satan manages to convince Eve that God would not really punish her for sinning or he would not exist, and where Jadis simply ignores the warning on the gates of the garden and tries to downgrade Aslan, the Green Witch, taking this tactic even further, very nearly succeeds in persuading Jill, Eustace, Puddleglum and Rilian that "[t]here is no Narnia, no Overworld, no sky, no sun, no Aslan" (632). Only when this fails to work because Puddleglum stamps out the fire spreading the intoxicating smoke, she resorts to violence. Her transformation into a snake does not help her either, however, because the male part of the company swiftly slays her.

Her serpent alter ego is the only thing about the Green Witch that might be seen as ridiculous. The male villains in *The Chronicles* more explicitly and overtly reveal the

ridiculous nature of evil. Uncle Andrew from *The Magician's Nephew* is rapidly exposed as a silly pedantic man, whose badness is outweighed by his silliness. The narrator constantly emphasizes his overestimation of his own looks and abilities, for instance, in relation to the White Witch. Although he is terrified of her when she is actually around, as soon as she is out of sight, he assures himself that "the Witch would fall in love with him" because he is so "devilish well-preserved" (49). Lewis's choice of words here may indicate a pun, pointing at a source for Uncle Andrew: Satan and his good though tarnished looks.

The main antagonist in *The Horse and His Boy* is Rabadash, the Calormene heir to the throne. Edmund describes him as "a most proud, bloody, luxurious, cruel and self-pleasing tyrant" (234). Many of these personality traits Milton also applies to Satan in *Paradise Lost*. His pride and cruelty have been mentioned already above, but for the other traits there are clear indications as well. Satan is bloody, as he is responsible for a civil war in heaven. He is also luxurious: his capital Pandæmonium is so opulent that "[n]ot Babilon, / Nor great Alcairo such magnificence / Equal'd in all thir glories," and his throne is of "Royal State, which far / Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind" (I.717-9; II.1-2). It seems then that Lewis based the particulars of Rabadash's evilness on Satan. This mirroring is significant because Rabadash is perhaps the most ridiculous evil character in the whole *Narnia*-series. His pride is such that he will not admit defeat or treat with the Archenlanders. Aslan punishes him by changing him into "simply and unmistakably, a donkey" (307). Because he behaved like an ass, he now is one. This echoes the Son's punishment of Satan: because Satan seduced mankind in the shape of a snake, he is forced "to undergo / This annual humbling [that is, changing into a serpent] certain number'd days / To dash thir pride" (X.575-7). Satan's crime, his punishment, and the purpose and executor of that punishment are thus all echoed in Lewis's treatment of Rabadash. Moreover, the clear echoes allow Lewis to demonstrate his stance on the ridiculous nature of evil quite well.

Most of the other evil characters in the *Narnia* series play a more minor role. Nevertheless, a brief survey will show that they too can be related to Satan, and that they too display the ridiculousness of evil. King Miraz, the villain of *Prince Caspian*, is too proud, which leads to him "bawling out his acceptance to Edmund" of the single combat against Peter which is to determine who has won the war for the kingship of Narnia (401). Shift, the Ape, who causes civil war in *The Last Battle* and sells his own countrymen to make money, is portrayed as ugly and silly. The more power he gets, the sillier he gets: he wears an expensive scarlet jacket to appear more kingly, but keeps pulling it up "to scratch himself" (683). Risha Tarkaan, the Calormene officer helping Shift, is the first character who establishes himself as the Narnian version of an atheist. He does call on the Calormene god Tash to further his own ends, though. His proud and commanding behaviour vanishes instantly when he discovers that the god he thus abused is actually real: "[h]e was shaking like a man with a bad hiccup" (739). Like Satan, he preys on the weak: in Satan's case this is Eve, in Rishda's case the alcoholic Ape and the gullible, naïve Talking Beasts and other Narnian creatures, who believe him because it has been so long since they saw Aslan that they do not know what to believe. Rishda's punishment is that the god whose existence he belied takes him "to [his] own place": "[w]ith a sudden jerk —like a hen stooping to pick up a worm —Tash pounced on the miserable Rishda and tucked him under the upper of his two right arms" (740; 739).

Eve, like Satan, is echoed in several characters in Lewis's children's books. This is firstly mostly negative. Digory brings evil in the form of Jadis to Narnia, as Eve's sin allows Satan to bring Sin and Death into our world. Both are seduced by "more desire to know" (Milton, *Paradise Lost* IV.523). Digory also represents an anti-Eve, however. When Jadis tries to tempt Digory again in the garden, he does not fall for it. His obedience to Aslan's order temporarily saves Narnia. The apple he has brought back rather than eating it himself or bringing it back for his dying mother grows into a tree which "is to be the protection of

Narnia" (*The Magician's Nephew* 96). Aslan adds that the apple would also have worked if someone had stolen and planted it, but "it would have done so by making Narnia into another strong and cruel empire like Charn [or perhaps Earth], not the kindly land I mean it to be" (100). Digory has thus redeemed himself. In that way he again resembles Eve, who also in some way redeems herself since "[b]y mee the Promis'd Seed shall all restore" (XII.623).

Jadis has already been established as *The Chronicles*' principal version of Satan. Her temptation skills not only come to the fore in *The Magician's Nephew*, but also in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. There she tempts Edmund with the promise of promotion: "I want a nice boy whom I could bring up as a Prince and who would be King of Narnia when I am gone" (126). This echoes Satan's promise of godliness to Eve in book IX of *Paradise Lost*: "ye shall be as Gods" (708). It is noteworthy that Jadis twice guarantees a political position, that of king, as a way of seducing someone, for Satan is also wont to use political terms in his attempts to seduce Eve. He, for instance, calls Eve "Empress of this fair World" and "Sovran of Creatures" (IX.568; 612).

Edmund's likeness to Eve, so far limited to a shared wish for a higher place in the existing hierarchy, is further deepened by the fact that both temptation scenes are framed with delicious food. As soon as Eve has caved, "[g]reedily she ingorg'd without restraint" (791). Similarly, Edmund "at first" "tried to remember that it is rude to speak with one's mouth full, but soon he forgot about this and thought only of trying to shovel as much Turkish Delight as he could, and the more he ate the more he wanted to eat, and he never asked himself why the Queen should be so inquisitive" (125). Milton follows his comment about Eve stuffing herself with fruit with the remark that she "knew not eating Death" (792). It is noteworthy that, though he is not yet aware of this, Edmund too is eating death. If he succeeds in bringing his brother and sisters to the Witch's house, as Mr Beaver says, his life and that of his siblings "wouldn't be worth a shake of my whiskers" (148). Like Digory and Eve, though, Edmund is

allowed to redeem himself. After his rescue, he is humbled and determined to fight for the good cause. In the First Battle of Beruna, he ensures that the Witch is no longer able to turn people into stone. Peter gives him all the credit for their survival up to the point that Aslan came to the rescue: "we'd have been beaten if it hadn't been for him . . . when he reached her he had the sense to bring his sword down on her wand instead of trying to go for her directly and simply getting made a statue himself for his pains" (192).

It is remarkable that the two characters most resembling Eve with regard to her role in the plot are male. At the same time, Edmund's redeeming action has been read as "symbolizing a restoration of his masculine power over her [Jadis] and returning Narnia to patriarchal order" (McCulloch). This will be discussed more thoroughly in chapter 2.

The Fall in *Paradise Lost* takes place in book 9 so that in Books 4 to 8, Eve is shown in her full prelapsarian glory. In that capacity, she is clearly mirrored by Ramandu's daughter, a woman whom the sailing company in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* meet on one of the last islands they visit. Both women exude royalty without needing any adornments. Eve obviously wears nothing; her "naked beauty" and regal appearance are mentioned time and again (IV.713). Ramandu's daughter also wears only "a single long garment of clear blue which left her arms bare," and she is "bareheaded" (517). Yet she is instantly recognized as "a great lady" (517). Incidentally, this is exactly the term Lewis twice uses for Eve in his *Preface to Paradise Lost*, referring to her as "a great lady doing the honours of her own house" (116). There are other similarities. Both Eve and the daughter of Ramandu "are generally referred to by honorifics" (Baird Hardy 93). Eve receives epithets such as "[m]y fairest, my espous'd" and "[b]est Image of my self and dearer half" (V.18; 95). The first name of Ramandu's daughter is never given; she is referred to as "Madam" and "the Lady" (517; 521). Their royal appearance and names are suitable for women who have extraordinary fathers. Eve is a "Daughter of God," whilst Ramandu is an immortal Star (IV.660). A further similarity is that

Eve as well as the Lady "participate in very similar early morning worship" (Baird Hardy 93). Adam and Eve begin "[t]hir Orisons" by bowing to the East, and then proceed to pray and sing (V.145). Ramandu and his daughter likewise "face the east" in the very early morning and then sing (520). Both women also preside over a banquet, Eve preparing one for her husband and an archangel, the Lady for king Caspian and his company. Finally, both women, the Lady sooner than Eve, die because of an evil person inhabiting the body of a serpent. Eve ultimately dies because of her seduction by Satan in the shape of a snake. Ramandu's daughter dies because she is bitten by the Green Witch in her serpent garb. Even the circumstances in which this happens are somewhat correspondent: Eve is gardening when Satan approaches her, and the Lady (at that time Caspian's wife and Rilian's mother) is "maying" (Lewis, *The Silver Chair* 575).

The final character resembling Eve, albeit in a fairly abstract way, is Lucy. Eve serves often as a catalyst in *Paradise Lost*. It is she who proposes to work separately, who is the first to fall, who tempts Adam to do the same, and the one who first acknowledges her mistake and expresses her deep remorse. Still, her most important forwarding of the plot leads to the Fall so that Eve might be seen as foremost a catalyst for 'the bad.' Lucy, on the other hand, serves as a catalyst for 'the good,' as she brings her siblings to Narnia, convinces them to stay and help free the Narnians from the White Witch's rule, and is the cause of so many other good things. Although their function is thus similar, the outcome of Eve's and Lucy's actions is quite different.

Her role in the narrative also links Lucy to another character in *Paradise Lost*. Abdiel is one of the few lower-ranked angels mentioned by name. The reason he receives a name seems to be that he represents what Milton considered true heroism. In Book IX he argues that his poem will sing "the better fortitude / Of Patience and Heroic Martyrdom / Unsung" as of yet (31-3). A real hero, according to Milton, is thus "a warrior who fights by resisting temptation,"

someone who remains steadfast even when surrounded by others who do succumb to temptation (Luxon, IX.31n). Abdiel is a prime example of a hero in keeping with this understanding of heroism. When God proclaims his Son King of Heaven, Satan summons a meeting. In a rousing speech he calls for rebellion, for "[w]ho can in reason then or right assume / Monarchie over such as live by right / His equals" (V.794-6)? His entire following applauds his rebellion, except one from "among the Seraphim / Abdiel, then whom none with more zeale ador'd / The Deitie" (804-6). Abdiel stands up to Satan, tries to persuade him and his audience to give up their rebellion, to "tempt not these; but hast'n to appease / Th' incensed Father, and th' incensed Son, / While Pardon may be found in time besought" (846-8). He soon finds out that he is all alone in his loyalty to God, and yet he remains "[u]nshak'n, unseduc'd": "[n]or number nor example with him wrought / To swerve from truth" (899; 901-2). There are dim echoes to for instance Aslan in this episode, but the clearest echo can be found in Lucy.

Lucy is the first of the Pevensie children to enter Narnia. When she returns, her siblings do not believe her account of her adventure. Edmund calls her "batty," Susan tells her not to be "silly" and Peter, after examining the wardrobe through which she entered and finding a solid wood back rather than a snow-laden forest, says she has played "a jolly good hoax" on them (Lewis, *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe* 120-1). Lucy does not give up, however. A few days later, she returns to Narnia, this time followed by Edmund. Having met the White Witch, however, he has good reasons to deny the existence of Narnia. He claims Lucy and he were just playing pretend: "[t]here is nothing there really" (129). This time Lucy is even more adamant that she is telling the truth: "I don't care what you think, and I don't care what you say. You can tell the Professor or you can write to Mother or you can do anything you like. I know I've met a Faun in there" (130). Like Abdiel, she sticks to her beliefs though those

around her disagree with her. Neither "number," namely all her siblings, nor "example," namely Edmund who ought to know better, tempt her to abandon the truth (V.899).

The same happens in *Prince Caspian*, where Lucy is the only one to see Aslan on the children's journey through the woods to find Caspian. By then she is not alone, however. Edmund has learned from his former mistakes, and he supports her. Still, the group votes for going the wrong way instead of the way Aslan indicated to Lucy, and Lucy joins them "crying bitterly" (374). Aslan berates her for this: "I couldn't have left the others and come up to you alone, how could I? Don't look at me like that... oh well, I suppose I *could*" (380). Lucy is not a perfect hero. Lewis shows how you can do the wrong thing even if you know what the right thing is. By doing this, he stresses Milton's and his own preferred type of heroism: to stay true to your beliefs no matter what.

A final correspondence between Lucy and Abdiel can be found in the last book of the *Narnia*-series. As Abdiel tried to persuade Satan and his followers to make peace while this is still possible, so Lucy tries to persuade the Dwarfs to open their eyes before it is too late. Three whole pages are devoted to this enterprise, and she even enlists Aslan's help, though unfortunately to no avail, just as Abdiel's appeal fell on deaf ears.

One of the most obvious echoes of *Paradise Lost* in *The Chronicles of Narnia* is that of the Son in Aslan. This already starts with their status as son of God. The Son in *Paradise Lost* is presented as mirroring God himself: "[b]eyond compare the Son of God was seen / Most glorious, in him all his Father shon" (III.138-9). Aslan, likewise, is introduced as "the King of the wood and the son of the great Emperor-beyond-the-Sea" (*The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe* 146). Furthermore, both the Son and Aslan are the active forces of creation. Although God is the creator, he creates through his Son: "So spake th' Almightie, and to what he spake / His Word, the Filial Godhead, gave effect" (VII.174-5). Similarly, Narnia is created through the words of Aslan: "with an unspeakable thrill, she [Polly] felt quite certain

that all the things were coming (as she said) "out of the Lion's head". When you listened to his song you heard the things he was making up: when you looked around you, you saw them" (*The Magician's Nephew* 65). Thirdly, Aslan sacrifices himself for a sinner to assuage the Deep Magic instituted by his father, just as the Son will sacrifice himself for mankind to appease God's justified wrath. Fourthly, when Aslan arrives at the battlefield in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, he "achieve[s] almost instantaneous victory" (Baird Hardy 141). This echoes Messiah's victory over Satan in book VI of *Paradise Lost*. When the Son appears, he does not even need to fight; his "count'nance too severe to be beheld" is enough to let the fallen angels throw themselves "headlong . . . [d]own from the verge of Heav'n" (825; 864-5). As mentioned earlier, Aslan also echoes God, and thus the Son, in the importance he attaches to free will. Both express their conviction that love and obedience without the choice to not love and not obey is meaningless.

In fact, there are countless ways in which Lewis's Aslan mirrors Milton's Messiah. Lewis even explicitly refers to the likeness of Aslan to earth's Son of God. When the sailing company has reached the end of the world in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, Aslan informs Lucy that she will not return to Narnia. A stricken Lucy sobs that she cannot live in her own world because Aslan is not there. He replies that she can meet him there, because he also lives on earth, but that he has "another name" there (541). He then adds that "the very reason why you were brought to Narnia" was "that by knowing me here a little, you may know me better there" (541). In the last book of the series, Lewis appears to imply that Lucy has come to understand Aslan's meaning, for she tells Tirian that "[i]n our world too, a Stable once had something inside it that was bigger than our whole world" (744).

Of all the characters in Milton's epic, Adam is the least visible in *The Chronicles*. His main characteristics in *Paradise Lost* seem to be his masculine superiority over Eve and his overfondness of Eve. He is warned for the latter by Raphael, who tells him with "contracted

brow" that Eve is worthy of "[t]hy cherishing, thy honouring, and thy love, / Not thy subjection" (VIII.560; 569-70). Despite this warning, Adam ultimately still falls because of his uxoriousness: "he scrupl'd not to eat, / Against his better knowledge, not deceav'd, / But fondly overcome with Femal charm" (IX.997-9). The one character echoing Adam's uxoriousness in *The Chronicles* is Rilian, the vanished prince in *The Silver Chair*. After his mother's death by the sting of a green snake, he takes to riding through the wildlands of Narnia. During those travels he meets "the most beautiful woman he had ever seen," which causes a change to come over him (576). Not long after, Rilian disappears never to be seen again. The Green Witch has persuaded him to leave his responsibilities and his bereaved father behind to live with her. Jill, Eustace and Puddleglum journey to the Underworld on a quest for him. When they find Rilian, he turns out to be a quite unpleasant person, belittling Jill and Puddleglum. He is hardly troubled by the evil plan of the Green Witch to attack Narnia from below, using the Eartmen as slaves to dig a tunnel and Rilian as a pretext for a right to claim the throne. The prince is fine with this, telling Jill that, once he is king, he "shall do all by the counsel of my Lady" (622). Jill's response is that in her world, "they don't think much of men who are bossed about by their wives" (622). Eustace later also accuses Rilian of uxoriousness, saying that he is a "great baby, really; tied to that woman's apron strings" (623). As soon as Rilian is freed from the charm that kept him thus subjected to the Witch, he asserts his independence. In this way, Lewis demonstrates his agreement with Milton's God's stance on the position of men in relation to women.

1.4 Conclusion

This chapter has aimed to show that C.S. Lewis's *The Chronicles of Narnia* in many and varied ways echo John Milton's *Paradise Lost*. I have argued that these echoes, or intertextual

links, can be found in setting and plot elements, but most widely in the characters inhabiting the books. It seems that Lewis had at least three reasons for this intertextuality.

First of all, some of the textual links faithfully echo Milton's poem without any clear attempts at adaptation, except in phrasing. Examples of this are the description of the garden in *The Magician's Nephew*, the use of food in tempting scenes and the mirrored flaw in Adam and Rilian. This kind of echoes allows the reader to easily recognize Milton's text behind Lewis's words, so that he or she becomes more aware of other, more imaginative ways *The Chronicles* mirror *Paradise Lost.*

The second reason Lewis might have had for the intertextual links is to show how Narnia differs from our own world. An illustration of this is that, though Jadis and the Green Witch are very similar to Satan, they, unlike him, do not succeed in their scheme to corrupt mankind in order to be able to rule them. Another significant reversal is the fact that Narnia's clearest version of Satan is a woman, whereas its clearest versions of fallen Eve are two boys.

A third reason for the echoes could be because they allow Lewis to explore issues he also discussed in his scholarly work. The most evident example of this is his insistence upon the ultimately ridiculous nature of evil, a conviction which he believed Milton shared with him. Virtually all of the evil characters in the *Narnia*-series are therefore depicted, in a lesser or greater manner, as foolish. Aside from the nature of evil, the nature of true heroism is, for instance, also touched upon through the correspondence between Abdiel and Lucy.

Chapter 2

Gender Hierarchy

2.1 Introduction and Theory

Hierarchy is a very important concept both in *Paradise Lost* and *The Chronicles of Narnia*. In a chapter on hierarchy in his *Preface* to Milton's poem, C.S. Lewis argues that what he calls "the Hierarchical conception" is in fact "the central thought" of Milton's work, something that is often misunderstood and mistakenly criticised according to him (72). The most vehement critics of Lewis's own books have also found fault with what they deem the "rigid hierarchy of power" that the books advocate (Toynbee). This chapter will examine hierarchy as it is depicted in *Paradise Lost* and *The Chronicles*. Since the main question posed by this thesis is in what way Lewis adapted elements from *Paradise Lost* in his own books, the primary goal of this chapter will be to study how Lewis reworks Milton's ideas about hierarchy. Because Lewis provided a clear explanation of what he sees as Milton's views on hierarchy in his *Preface to Paradise Lost,* this can serve as a starting point. The focus of the chapter will be on gender hierarchy.

Much scholarly and critical attention has already been devoted to gender hierarchy. *The Cambridge Companion to John Milton*, *The Cambridge Companion to Paradise Lost* and *The Cambridge Companion to C.S. Lewis*, for instance, all contain chapters on the respective subject's views on the roles of the sexes. Shannon Miller, writing on Milton, claims that *Paradise Lost* shows a "competition between equality and hierarchy" (156). Diane McColley goes further, asserting that "[t]o the small degree that Adam and Eve are 'higher' and 'lower' they are as two strings tuned to different pitches, to make harmony" (189). Ann Loades states

that according to Lewis, "[w]omen and men alike may be graced to develop the needed virtues which they possess in different measure so as to enhance the other" (170). These quotations indicate that both Lewis and Milton convey a complex picture of gender hierarchy in their works. On the one hand, men and women are not portrayed as equals. *Paradise Lost,* according to Miller and McColley, clearly envisions Adam as superior to Eve. Adam remains the one who is "'higher'" and Eve the one who is "'lower'" (McColley 189). Moreover, the competition between equality and hierarchy, which Miller argues *Paradise Lost* demonstrates, still ends with the poem upholding "its own cultural views of women's secondary status" (162). Loades, furthermore, contends that Lewis presents men and women as possessing virtues "in different measures," which implies an innate difference between the sexes, and therefore some form of hierarchy since "subordination follows from the differences between the genders" (Miller 153). On the other hand, both authors question such a traditional hierarchy in their works. Miller maintains that, while *Paradise Lost* does ultimately articulate hierarchy, "its disputes . . . [simultaneously work to] expose the problems posed by a stable gender hierarchy" (162). McColley asserts that, although Adam and Eve might be different, only together they "make harmony," which suggest some sort of equality (189). Similarly, in one of his works Lewis claims that men and women only "[j]ointly . . . become fully human" (qtd. in Loades 171). The consensus thus seems to be that both Milton and Lewis ultimately maintain a traditional patriarchal hierarchy while at the same time challenging this.

It is striking that scholars describe Milton's and Lewis's view on gender hierarchy in such very similar terms. This chapter aims to show how Milton portrays the relationship between the sexes in his epic, arguing that *Paradise Lost* posits Eve's subjection as well as her equality, though not in equal measures. I will subsequently demonstrate that Lewis in a similar way emphasises traditional patriarchy while simultaneously undermining the idea that men and women are not equal. I will show that Lewis, especially in his depiction of certain characters,

echoes Milton, which accounts for part of the resemblance in the authors' portrayal of gender hierarchy.

In the 1970s, gender theory emerged as a "methodological approach" which argued that while sex is nature, gender is nurture (West 341). Research has shown that "[i]n the West, the dominant gender system of meanings, traits, and attributes is just as binary as the sex system" (West 341). This means that masculinity, though the expression and definition of it may differ per region, is directly linked to being of the male sex. Gender theory has been used to examine gender hierarchy and its origins (West 342). Scholars have looked into, for instance, "division of labour" and "language use and other representations of and by women and men" as reasons for "women's universal subordination to men" (West 342-3). In this chapter I will examine these possible sources for the type of gender hierarchy found in *Paradise Lost* and *The Chronicles of Narnia*. Additionally, I will consider the theological reasons for it, since both works are avowedly Protestant Christian in nature. By looking into, for instance, the way labour is divided in Eden and Narnia, I can assess to what degree men and women are depicted as equals in these literary realms. These sources, or reasons, make gender hierarchy or equality explicit and tangible, so that it becomes easier to compare the way gender relationships work in *Paradise Lost* to the way they work in *The Chronicles*.

2.2 *Paradise Lost* and Gender Hierarchy

The centrality of the issue of hierarchy in *Paradise Lost* is undeniable. Almost immediately after the two humans are introduced, it is noted that they are "both / Not equal, as thir sex not equal seemd" (IV.295-6). The poem then goes on to explain how their looks apparently reveal Adam's "absolute rule" and Eve's "Subjection" (301; 308). This seems to suggest a straightforward gender hierarchy is promoted. However, as Thomas Luxon comments in a note to these lines, Satan "is the implied observer throughout this passage," and he is hardly

the most reliable witness (296n). Gender hierarchy is thus questioned at the same time as it is posited.

A close reading of book IX further confirms the central nature of hierarchy in Milton's work. This is the book that the entire poem works towards, because this is the part of the poem where paradise is actually lost. Satan tempts Eve through a combination of logic and an appeal to emotion. He addresses her as "sovran Mistress," "Fairest resemblance of thy Maker faire," and "Empress of this fair World" (532; 538; 568). These are all very much hierarchical terms that appeal to Eve's nascent vanity, to which the narrator already alludes in Eve's creation story where "Milton echoes . . . in Eve's actions the myth of Narcissus" (Luxon, IV.461n). The serpent also relegates Adam to the role of a mere "[b]eholder" of Eve's "Celestial Beautie" and other accomplishments (544; 540). The angels, moreover, ought to serve as "[Eve's] daily train," adoring and serving her (548). Eve recognizes his flattery and calls him out on his overstatement of the facts: "thy overpraising leaves in doubt / The vertue of that Fruit, in thee first prov'd" (615-6). She acknowledges that Satan's depiction of hierarchy is not correct: Eve is, for example, not really the "Fairest resemblance" of her Creator, because that would be Adam (538; VIII.543-5). Nevertheless, she still asks the serpent to guide her towards the tree which "[g]ave elocution to the mute" (748). Once arrived at the three, Satan resumes his tempting speech, arguing that since he became "of brute human, yee [will become] of human Gods" by eating of the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge (712). His final words reiterate this notion by styling Eve a "Goddess humane" (732).

As soon as Eve, having been convinced by Satan's heady mix of logic and flattery, has finished "eating Death," the theme of hierarchy is revisited (792). Eve now seems to have lost any sense of the proper order of things. She starts worshipping the Tree in terms first reserved for God, promising it the "Orisons, each Morning duly paid" that formerly had been God's preserve: "O Sovran, vertuous, precious of all Trees / In Paradise, . . . henceforth my early

care, / Not without Song, each morning, and due praise / Shall tend thee" (V.145; IX.795-801). She then wonders whether she should tell Adam about "the odds of Knowledge" she believes to have received by her consumption of the fruit (820). Remarkably, Eve believes that this Knowledge can supply "what wants / In Femal Sex," so that she can become "more equal" or perhaps even "somtime / Superior" to Adam (821-2; 823; 824-5). Since she is fallen when she suggests this, it would seem that the narrator does not see it as a blessing that Eve might become equal or superior to Adam. Like the passage describing our first encounter with our universal progenitors, the passage describing the Fall thus appears to promote a traditional patriarchal hierarchy in which God has set Adam "above her made of thee" (X.149).

However, other passages in *Paradise Lost,* both before and after the Fall, call this into question. Adam, for instance, several times insists that Eve is his "other self" (VIII.450). That seems to suggest equality rather than superiority on Adam's part. Furthermore, though Adam claims to "understand in the prime end / Of Nature her th'inferiour . . . resembling less / His Image who made both," he cannot but see Eve as "absolute," going so far as to say that "Authority and Reason on her waite, / As one intended first, not after made" (VIII.540-4; 547; 554-5). Elsewhere, the narrator takes pains to insure his readers that Eve does not leave a conversation about the "Fabric of the Heavens" between Adam and Raphael because she was "not with such discourse / Delighted, or not capable her eare / Of what was high," but because "Her Husband the Relater she preferr'd / Before the Angel" (VIII.74; 48-50; 52-53). This does not suggest that Eve is in any less than Adam in mind or understanding.

After the Fall, Adam gives a "forty-line diatribe against all women" in which he "attacks Eve for all of the weaknesses of women chronicled in antifeminist tracts" (Miller 161). Her reaction is significant: she "at his feet / Fell humble" and pleads with Heaven to have "all / the sentence from thy [Adam's] head remov'd may light / On me, sole cause to thee of all this woe" (X.910-1; 933-5). Whereas Adam rants and raves, unjustly apportioning all the blame

and responsibility for the Fall to Eve, Milton presents Eve's submission "as a Christ-like willingness to accept *all* the blame" (Miller 162). So whilst "the resulting hierarchy that the poem ultimately articulates" is clearly patriarchal, *Paradise Lost*, "untraditionally," does insist upon "women's spiritual completeness, responsibility, and fitness for all 'rational delight,'" (Miller 162; McColley 189).

In two other ways, Milton also undermines the idea of a "proper and stable gender hierarchy" (Miller 158). As discussed in the previous chapter, Milton did not favour the traditional view on heroism with its emphasis on martial prowess and striving for honour. Instead, he prefers "Patience and Heroic Martyrdom" and "Subverting wordly strong, and wordly wise / By simply meek" (VIII.32; XII.568-9). The former type is strongly linked to traditionally masculine virtues such as physical strength and fighting skills. Milton's view on heroism sounds much less gendered. Martyrdom as a virtue could equally belong to men or women. Moreover, Milton does not seem to differentiate firmly between masculine and feminine virtues. Adam declares Eve to be "inferiour, in the mind / And inward Faculties," thus seemingly claiming that intelligence and rational thought are predominantly masculine assets (VIII.541-2). However, in book IX Eve delivers a rational and level-headed defence of her proposal to work separately, arguing, for instance, that "Faith, Love, Vertue unassaid / alone, without exterior help sustaind" are not really laudable (335-6). This echoes Milton's own claim in his *Areopagitica* where he states that he "cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race" (*Essential Prose*, 187). Eve thus possesses the same 'masculine' virtues as Adam. Adam, on the other hand, displays traditionally feminine virtues as well. He, for example, gives in to Eve's wish to divide their labours for a while because of his "respect for open dialogue and true relation" (McColley 183). All of this demonstrates Milton's choice to let Adam and Eve "both [be] capable, in proportion, of all sorts of virtue" (McColley 183).

This choice, in turn, undermines any notion of a stable gender hierarchy in *Paradise Lost,* since it becomes unclear why either men or women should be superior considering both can be equally virtuous.

The other undermining element in *Paradise Lost* is related to the tasks Adam and Eve perform. Generally there is no gender-specific assignment of activities. Throughout almost the entire poem, Adam and Eve share their work. There is continuous talk of "our pleasant labour," "thir mornings rural work," and they discuss together "how that day they best may ply / Thir growing work" (IV. 625; V. 211; IX. 201-2). There is no suggestion that gardening, planning future activities, or praying are distinctly male or female tasks. Adam summarizes this notion when he says "Man hath his daily work of body or mind / appointed, which declares his dignitie" (IV. 618-9). His use of 'man' does not refer to the male sex, but to man as opposed to animals. Adam thus talks about himself and Eve as one entity, "Man," whose mutual responsibility is tending and caring for the Garden of Eden. Milton does not associate these tasks with one part of humanity, but with humanity as a whole.

Only once, in book V, does Adam and Eve's work "fill typical gender roles" (McColley 187). Adam is portrayed as resting in his "coole Bowre," while Eve is busy preparing "For dinner savourie fruits, of taste to please / true appetite" (300; 304-5). This is perhaps a foreshadowing of the more clearly patriarchal division of labour from after the Fall. The punishments doled out by the Son for the first time distinctly separate Adam and Eve's areas of responsibilities. Adam is made responsible for the earth and its fruits, because the Son specifically addresses Adam when he says "Thorns also and Thistles it shall bring **thee** forth / Unbid [my emphasis]" (X. 203-4). Eve's punishment is that "Children thou shalt bring / In sorrow forth" (X. 194-5). Her responsibilities now lie within in the house, in the rearing of children.

The second part of Eve's punishment is surprising: "to thy Husbands will / Thine shall submit, hee over thee shall rule" (X. 195-6). Earlier on, Adam had already been established as Eve's head. The crucial difference is that in the prelapsarian world, Adam would never have burst into the kind of misogynistic tirade he launches into a little further onwards. For Milton, being inferior did not mean being "servile" (McColley 178). Adam, for instance, as a man, is inferior to Archangel Raphael, so their meeting is described as follows: "Adam though not awd, / Yet with submiss approach and reverence meek, / as to a superior nature, bow[ed] low" (V. 358-60). It is completely natural that Adam behaves like this; the poem does not suggest any kind of humiliation. The same applies to Eve's relationship to Adam: her partial subjection to him as her superior does not imply servitude. At least, it did not before the Fall. After the Fall, however, Adam has become a different man, so Eve's punishment is in fact a warning that this will change. In the postlapsarian world, inferiority can very well lead to humiliation and servitude (and does so before the end of the same book), because the superior has becomes less than he was. Milton has been criticized for his "partial acceptance of Pauline tradition concerning the subordination of wives and the misogynous diatribes he allows some of his dramatis personae," and while I have demonstrated that many elements in *Paradise Lost* do indeed stress Eve's submission to Adam, the poem is very complex in its depiction of gender hierarchy (McColley 175). There is a "structural enactment of a gender hierarchy inversion" which shows Eve as Adam's equal or even superior (Miller 157). It appears there are three competing conceptions of gender hierarchy in Milton's epic. The strongest competitor is the traditional Biblical account that establishes the man as the superior partner. Until the very end of the poem, though, this account is challenged by the notion that Adam and Eve are really equals, and the idea that Eve, "as the last creation," is "the better creation" (Miller 158).

2.3 *The Chronicles of Narnia* and Gender Hierarchy

In an interview in 2002, author Philip Pullman claimed that *The Chronicles of Narnia* are ""monumentally disparaging of girls and women"" (Ezard). Although this may be a very bold formulation, it is not hard to see where Pullman got this idea. There are many moments in the series that, certainly at first glance, could be construed as denigrating females. Many of the male characters at one time or another make a belittling remark concerning the female sex. Digory, for instance, puts down Polly, saying that "[g]irls never want to know anything but gossip and rot about people getting engaged" (Lewis, *Magician's Nephew* 36). Father Christmas in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* states that women should not fight for "battles are ugly when women fight" (160). Prince Rilian in the *Silver Chair*, though with the excuse of being under the thralls of an enchantment, asks Jill "[i]s our little maid a politician[?]" while "patting her head in a quite infuriating fashion" (622). The narrator himself also occasionally makes remarks which emphasise traditional gender roles. An illustration of this can be found in *Prince Caspian* when the narrator comments that Peter's hugging and kissing of a badger "wasn't a girlish thing for him to do, because he was the High King" (396).

Besides these sporadic remarks there are also more structural issues regarding gender hierarchy. It is significant that Jadis, the only evil character to appear in more than one book and "Lewis's most fully realized and intriguing villain," closely resembles Milton's Satan (Baird Hardy 32). Like Satan, Jadis brings evil to a newly created world. Like Satan, Jadis is incapable of admitting defeat. When her sister has effectually won their battle for sovereignty, she rather destroys her entire world than "bow and sue for grace / With suppliant knee" (Milton, *Paradise Lost* I.111-2). Like Satan, Jadis blames others for her own failures, claiming that her sister "drove her" to using the magic spell that killed Charn, just as Satan

claims his fall is God's fault since God unfairly anointed Messiah king (Lewis, *Magician's Nephew* 41; Milton, *Paradise Lost* V.772-802).

Lewis is quite famous for his opinion, expressed in his *Preface,* that Satan is not only far from a hero, but that he is also "ridiculous" and as such comical (93). Through Jadis it becomes clearer what Lewis meant by this. Like Satan, she is not a hero. When she questions Aslan's promise and he roars loudly in reply, Lewis's description of her reaction is rather comical: "the Witch, after staring for a moment with her lips wide apart, picked up her skirts and fairly ran for her life" (*The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* 176). Her most majestic moment could have been her killing of Aslan, but in reality this event only reveals Jadis's true colours. Aslan comes to her as a willing victim to save Edmund, but she is still "struck with fear" when he appears and therefore orders him to be bound (Lewis, *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe* 180). Jadis then has him shaved, muzzled, and tied up even more securely by her followers, before she finally dares to slay the Lion. Satan immediately flees "to his Chariot; where it stood retir'd / From off the files of warr" when he is wounded, and Lewis clearly has done his utmost to demonstrate that Jadis likewise is a coward who feels no shame in letting her minions do her dirty work for her (Milton, *Paradise Lost* VI.338-9). With regard to gender hierarchy, it is important to notice that Lewis's principal version of Satan has changed sex: Jadis is female.

Another character in *The Chronicles* resembling Satan is the Queen of Underland from *The Silver Chair*. The most striking similarity lies in her alter ego, a big green snake. Her transformation into the snake is described as follows: "[her] arms appeared to be fastened to her sides. Her legs were intertwined with each other, and her feet had disappeared. . . . Her head was thrown far back and while her nose grew longer and longer, every other part of her face seemed to disappear" (Lewis, *The Silver Chair* 633). This corresponds closely to the description of Satan turning into a serpent as punishment for his seduction of man: "[h]is

Armes clung to his Ribs, his Leggs entwining / each other, till supplanted fown he fell / A monstrous Serpent on his Belly prone" (Milton, *Paradise Lost* X.512-4). Again, "a female villain [is] equat[ed] with the ultimate personification of evil" (Baird Hardy 33).

The male villains, on the other hand, are of course evil, but they feel much less dangerous, amongst other reasons because they are distinctly "mortal" (Baird Hardy 51). Uncle Andrew in *The Magician's Nephew* is evil because he has no scruples about using his own nephew as a guinea pig for his magical experiments. However, his ridiculous behaviour (he is consistently portrayed as "silly" and "foolish") and lack of real power ultimately prevent him from being a real danger (48-9).

King Miraz does pose a serious threat to the Old Narnians, nearly wiping them out, and the fact that he killed his own brother to get his throne marks him all the more as a villain. He is also easily manipulated by his lords into engineering his own destruction. They goad him into agreeing to a single combat between Peter and himself to avoid more bloodshed, and eventually kill him themselves in revenge for a slighting remark. This characterization of Miraz prevents him too from coming across as powerful and dangerous as the female villains in the other books of *The Chronicles*.

Rabadash, the main villain in *The Horse and His Boy*, is one of the most ridiculous characters in the series. He is a selfish yet powerful Calormene, desperate for Susan's hand, who does not hesitate to covertly attack Archenland, ordering his men to kill "every barbarian male within its walls, down to the child that was born yesterday," merely to be able to get to Narnia, conquer that as well, and then force Susan to marry him (279). When he is defeated, he refuses to discuss conditions for his release on the grounds of his own great superiority over a bunch of "barbarians and sorcerers" (306). This pride causes him to change into a donkey. Baird Hardy notices that "Rabadash not only makes an ass of himself, like Satan (at least in Lewis's view); he actually literally becomes one [parentheses mine]" (58). Despite his

connection to Satan, he still never becomes quite as awe-inspiring as the female villains. This is primarily due to his nature as a simple mortal man. He has no magical wand to turn people into stone, like Jadis, or magical powder to make people forget themselves, like the Queen of the Underland. The fear these Witches instigate is much more psychological; they enchant, entice, tempt. There is uncertainty about how to defeat such supernatural enemies. The male villains are much more straightforward: fear for them is simply fear for your life, not fear of becoming evil yourself, which is what happened to Rilian under the enchantment of the Queen of the Underland. Defeat is hence also more straightforward: simply go into battle and defeat them. And not even that might be necessary: Uncle Andrew is so shaken by all the events in Narnia that he loses even the little amount of power he once possessed. Generally, it is therefore possible to say that "[e]vil is feminized" quite often in the *Narnia*-series (McCulloch).

This observation becomes more poignant in the knowledge that most kings and leaders in *The Chronicles* are men, and that all female leaders have at least one man outranking them. There are no women who rule on their own, except for the evil Queen of the Underland and Jadis the White Witch. So although Susan and Lucy do become queens, Peter lords it over them as High King. Likewise, Cor (or Shasta) becomes king of Archenland, and therefore his wife Aravis becomes queen: her position is dependent on his birthright.

This preference among those "regarded as good" for male leaders begins with Aslan right after Narnia's creation (McCulloch). He summons a council to discuss the entrance of evil into the newly created world, and these are the creatures he calls to the council: "you, the chief Dwarf, and you the River-god, and you Oak and the He-Owl, and both the Ravens and the Bull-Elephant" (Lewis, *The Magician's Nephew* 72). Six out of the seven creatures in the council are male.

The fact that it is Aslan, the God of *The Chronicles*, who initiates the notion that males are somehow naturally better leaders than females provides a clear link with *Paradise Lost*. Milton does mention that "Spirits when they please / Can either Sex assume" but as Adam exclaims, God "peopl'd highest Heaven / With Spirits Masculine": not a single feminine angel, fallen or otherwise, is referred to in the poem (*Paradise Lost* I.423-4; X.889-90). So God's advisers and servants are all male. Furthermore, when Michael explains to Adam what will happen after the Fall, Eve is deliberately left out: "let Eve (for I have drencht her eyes) / Here sleep below while thou to foresight wak'st" (XI.367-8). Although God tells Eve in her sleep that "By [her] the Promis'd Seed shall all restore," and Michael instructs Adam to "Let her with thee partake what thou hast heard, / Chiefly what may concern her Faith to know," so that Eve is not completely ignorant, she is still explicitly left out of the vision of the future, only receiving the knowledge that is useful to her (XII.623; 598-9). It is quite possible that Lewis's largely male council is partially based upon Milton's equally male councils. At any rate, Fiona McCulloch's claim that Narnia reveals itself as "a Christian affirmation of patriarchy" seems appropriate: in Narnia it appears that a good society has a man at the helm, a bad one a woman. A link to *Paradise Lost* is easily made. Despite the many moments in the poem that suggest Eve's equality or even superiority, ultimately the Son does berate Adam for relinquishing his "Manhood, and the Place / Wherein God set thee above her made of thee" (X.148-9). Rather than allowing Eve to be his "God" or "guide," he should have taken his responsibility to rule, which is something the men in Narnia have done (X.145; 146).

However, it would be too easy to put away the *Narnia*-series as straightforwardly patriarchal or even sexist. Like *Paradise Lost*, *The Chronicles* are quite complex in their depiction of gender hierarchy. For instance, for the breaking of the Jadis's spell the two girls are needed just as much as the two boys, because as Mr Beaver says "down at Cair Paravel there are four thrones and it's a saying in Narnia time out of mind that when two Sons of

Adam and two Daughters of Eve sit on those four thrones, then it will be the end not only of the White Witch's reign but of her life" (Lewis, *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe* 148).

It is also important to remember that though Peter is the High King, "it is Lucy through whose eyes we see Narnia" (Baird Hardy 79). She comes first to Narnia and she is the only one throughout the series whose faith in Aslan remains steadfast and virtually unwavering. Her brother Edmund, on the other hand, is the traitor, the one responsible for nearly keeping Narnia in eternal winter. Lewis could equally well have ascribed this role to a female, and then perhaps cast Lucy as a male. Baird Hardy mentions that Lewis in fact changed the sex of the youngest child: it remained the protagonist but was now a girl named Lucy rather than a boy named Peter (79). Lucy is the sole character who appears in all seven books, "although sometimes briefly or mentioned only in passing" (Baird Hardy 79). She is often "the figure who sets events in motion," and as such arguably "the catalyst of the series" (Baird Hardy 80). In this respect, she is somewhat similar to Eve, although whereas some of Eve's actions lead to catastrophe Lucy's actions are commonly "for good" (Baird Hardy 80).

Lucy is, moreover, not the only female protagonist. Every book in the series has at least two main characters of which at least one is female. In *The Magician's Nephew*, Polly is as important as Digory, and in *The Silver Chair* and *The Last Battle*, Jill and Eustace both play a significant role. The female protagonists very often function as focalizers: the narrator seems to recount the thoughts and feelings of the girls more frequently than those of the boys. The facts that girls, and Lucy especially, have such an important role in the books and that every book contains at least one female protagonist are indicative of *The Chronicles'* general portrayal of women as "crucial to Narnia," and as such not less than the male characters (Baird Hardy 78).

There are two passages that are regularly evoked when critics discuss gender hierarchy in Lewis's *Narnia*-series. This is, firstly, the remark by Father Christmas that "battles are ugly

when women fight," and secondly, the very traditional division of labour in the house of the Beavers (Lewis, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* 160). These two cases are usually used to demonstrate the patriarchal nature of gender relations in the books. They are, however, not illustrative at all of Lewis's depiction of women and the roles they can have. Contrary to Father Christmas's remark, women do fight in *The Chronicles*. Lucy fights amidst the archers in the battle at Anvard in *The Horse and His Boy,* and she does this so well that she gains the "back-handed compliment" that she is "as good as a man" (Baird Hardy 95; Lewis 290). Jill, in *The Last Battle,* is even shown killing foes. Neither the narrator nor any of the characters express criticism over the role of fighting women, rather the opposite. Lucy's epithet is "the Valiant," and King Tirian describes Jill as "the bravest and the most woodwise of all my subjects" (Lewis, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* 195; *The Last Battle* 704). Tirian's compliment not only implicates that he favours Jill over any male in this regad, but it is also phrased in remarkably gender-neutral way: Jill is not the bravest girl or woman, but the bravest subject.

Another unconventional role women have is that of guide. Lucy serves a spiritual guide, leading her brothers and sister to Narnia and Aslan. Jill is quite literally a "Guide," that is, a girl scout, and she is capable of leading Tirian and Eustace so swiftly and silently through the Woods that Tirian exclaims she could be related to a Dryad (Lewis, *The Last Battle* 700). It seems that in Narnia, as in Eden, there are no tasks that are entrusted solely to men or to women.

Women are also repeatedly presented as the calm and practical voices of reason. Mrs Beaver, presented as a traditional matron cooking her husband dinner, in reaction to her husband and the children's panic over the disappearance of Edmund, who has gone to inform Jadis of his siblings' whereabouts, "very coolly" observes that she has plenty of time to pack some necessities because the Witch "can't be here for a quarter of an hour at least" (Lewis,

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe 156). Similarly, Hwin, the female Talking Horse in *The Horse and His Boy*, more than once is complimented by the narrator for her astute and rational suggestions. When Shasta, Aravis and the two Horses discuss a way to get through Tashbaan without problems, Hwin's plan to achieve this is chosen. And when Bree, the male Horse, objects to it on account of his pride and dignity, "Hwin humbly [says] (she was a very sensible mare), "the main thing is to get there"" (226). Her plan works, and so, like Lucy but on a much smaller scale, she becomes a catalyst for good. The rational argumentation used by, amongst others, Mrs Beaver and Hwin links them to Eve, who is also presented as very much capable of logical thinking and is also complimented for this by Adam: "well hast thou motion'd, well thy thoughts imploy'd" (Milton, *Paradise Lost* IX.229). Although Eve's rational arguments do ultimately lead to the Fall, they could have led to a test of virtue that would have made her stronger. At any rate, both Eve and the female characters in *The Chronicles* share a capability for rationality and the function of catalyst.

It is obvious now that Lewis presents a complicated gender hierarchy in his *Chronicles*. Women and girls are generally depicted as inferior to men and boys, but at the same time they are shown to possess the same virtues (courage, rational thought, unwavering faith) as men, and they can perform traditionally masculine roles (guides, warriors). Some women are depicted as the epitome of Evil, bearing striking resemblances to Milton's male Satan, whereas others are portrayed as the best humanity, that is men and women combined, (and occasionally the realm of animals) has to offer. Lucy's position as catalyst for good, most loyal believer in Aslan, and focal point for large portions of the series is not approximated by any of the male characters.

2.4 Conclusion

The works of Milton and Lewis seem to share the notion that ultimately men and women are not equal, that is, not the same. They are different, and generally have different amounts of different qualities, so that men, for instance, are more likely to fight. *Paradise Lost* and *The Chronicles of Narnia* both seem to advocate a patriarchal society, portraying men as superior to women. Both Milton and Lewis believed that in the prelapsarian world, this was not a bad thing: everyone except God was inferior to something (*Preface* 72). There was no shame or servility in this. Only in the postlapsarian world the superiority of men became an issue because the inferiority of women did then often turn into servility and humiliation (Loades 165; Wolfe 178). Both Milton and Lewis make abundantly clear in their works that women can fulfil all roles men fulfil and have all virtues men have. This does not make the sexes "interchangeable," however (Loades 165). Their works' stance on gender hierarchy is thus shown to be a complex one. If read carefully and in their entirety, neither *Paradise Lost* nor *The Chronicles of Narnia* lends itself for male chauvinism, and neither can then be justifiably labelled "sexist" (Ezard).

Finally, it is important to note that Lewis casts men in roles similar to those fulfilled by a woman in Milton, and vice versa. In Narnia, it is Digory who is tempted to hit the bell which brings Jadis to life, whilst Polly tries to stop him. Moreover, Lucy is the character who resembles most God's most loyal, and male, angel, Abdiel. Lastly, the most impressive antagonist of the series, who is closely linked to Satan, is the female Jadis. It might be plausible to deduce that Lewis thus reiterates his belief that men and women are not that different, that they are both capable of the same evil but also the same good, because both are human. Perhaps Lewis is then ultimately more 'modern' than the seventeenth-century writer whose poem he so often alludes to in his own books. He at least clearly felt free to make Eve male, which Milton would not and could never do.

Conclusion

This thesis has aimed to examine C.S. Lewis's children fantasy series, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, and its intertextual relationship with John Milton's epic poem *Paradise Lost*. Not much has yet been written concerning this subject. Nevertheless, the first chapter has demonstrated that Lewis uses Milton's poem in numerous major and minor ways. Milton's characterization of particularly Satan is clearly noticeable in the antagonists in *The Chronicles*. Eve, Abdiel and God are represented in Narnia as well. His influence is also visible in the description of Narnia's creation and the fall narrative surrounding it. There are even several passages which can almost pass as quotations of Milton's poem. Lewis's allusions to *Paradise Lost* in his *Narnia*-series are thus so distinct that they must stand out to anyone who has read Milton before coming to Lewis. It is of course more likely that the order will be inverse, since *Narnia* is a children's series whereas *Paradise Lost* is fairly advanced poetry. Therefore, a quote from *The Chronicles* might apply: "by knowing me here for a little, you may know me better there" (*The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* 541). Someone who has read Narnia and afterwards encounters Milton's poem might find themselves meeting surprisingly familiar characters, locations and themes.

One of those familiar themes is the theme of gender hierarchy, which was discussed in chapter 2. Milton gives a complicated, sometimes even contradictory view on gender hierarchy in his poem. Although it is clear that Eve must ultimately be obedient to Adam, her husband and head, the poem continually undermines this message as well. Lewis uses many of the same methods to reveal a quite similar stance on the right relationship between men and women. His books show girls as integral characters; they function as focal points and catalyst to propel the plot onwards. The whole series in fact starts with a little girl who climbs into a wardrobe. Just like Milton, who allows Eve to perform the same tasks as Adam, Lewis's

female characters fulfil the same roles as the male characters, up to fighting battles. Milton's insistence upon Eve's capability for rational thinking is matched in Narnian characters such as Mrs Beaver. Notwithstanding all of this, Lewis still maintains a quite traditional perspective on gender hierarchy. Apart from antagonists such as Jadis, women always have a superior male above them. The books also frequently contain gender-stereotypical remarks, for instance suggesting that all girls like to gossip. Lewis's readiness to cast men in a role similar to Eve's, or women in roles similar to Abdiel's or Satan's nevertheless suggests that he recognizes an equal potential in men and women for good as well as for" evil. Ultimately, Lewis's depiction of gender hierarchy thus seems to be slightly more modern than Milton's.

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